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The Hermit A POEM.

*Now taught by this, confess th' Almighty just,
And where thou can't unravel, learn to trust.*

FAR in a Wild, remote from publick view,
From Youth to Age, a rev'rend Hermit grew;
The Moss his Bed, the Cave his humble Cell,
His Food the Fruits, his Drink the Chrystal Well:
Unknown to Man, with God he pass'd the Days,
Pray'r all his Bus'ness, all his Pleasure Praise.
A life so sacred, such serene Repose
Seem'd Heaven itself; till one Suggestion rose;
That Vice should triumph, Virtue Vice obey,
Hence sprung some Doubts of Providence's Sway;
His Hopes no more a certain Prospect boast,
And all the Tenor of his Soul is lost:
To clear this Doubt, to know the World by Sight,
To find if Books or Swains report it right;
He with the Sun a rising Journey went,
Sedate to think and watching each Event.
The Morn was wasted in the Pathless Grass,
And long and lonesome was the Wild to pass;
But when the southern Sun had warm'd the Day
A Youth came posting o'er a crossing Way.
His rayment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful Ringlets wav'd his Hair,
Then near approaching, Father, Hail! he cry'd:
And Hail, my son, the rev'rend Sire reply'd.
Words followed Words, from Questions Answers flow'd
And Talk of various kind deceiv'd the Road.
Till each with other pleas'd and loth to part,
While in their Age they differ, join in Heart.
Thus stands an aged Elm in Ivy bound;
Thus youthful Ivy clasps an Elm around.
Now sunk the Sun, the closing Hour of Day
Came onward mantled o'er with Sober gray,
Nature in Silence bid the World repose.
When near the Road a stately Palace rose,
It chanc'd the generous Master of the Dome
Still made his House the wand'ring Strangers Home.
Yet still the Kindness, from a thirst of Praise
Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive Ease.
The Pair arrive! The liv'ry'd Servants wait,
Their Lord receives them at the pompous Gate.
The Table groans with costly Piles of Food,
And all is more than hospitable good.

Then led to rest, the Day's long Toil they drown
 Deep sunk in sleep and Silk and Heaps of Down
 At length 'tis Morn; and at the Dawn of Day
 Along the wide Canals the Zephyrs play,
 Up rise the Guests obedient to the call,
 An early Banquet deck't the splendid Hall.
 Rich luscious Wine a golden Vessel grac'd
 Which the kind Master forc'd the Guests to taste;
 Then pleas'd and thankful, from the Porch they go
 And, but the Landlord, none had cause of Woe :
 His Cup was vanish'd, for in secret Guise
 The younger Guest purloin'd the glittering Prize.
 As one who spies a Serpent in his Way
 Glift'ning and balking in the summers Ray,
 Disorder'd stops, to shun the Danger near,
 Then walks with Faintness on, and looks with Fear
 So seem'd the Sire when far upon the Road
 The shining spoil his wiley Partner shew'd ;
 He stopp'd with Silence, walk'd with trembling Heart,
 And much he wish'd but durst not ask to part,
 Murmuring he lifts his Eyes and thinks it hard
 That generous Actions meet a base Reward.
 While thus they pass the Sun his Glory shrouds,
 The changing Skies hang out their Sable Clouds,
 A Sound in Air presag'd approaching Rain
 And Beasts to Covert scud a-cro'ss the Plain :
 Warn'd by the Signs the wand'ring Pair retreat
 To seek for Shelter at a neighbouring Seat;
 'Twas built with Turrets on a rising Ground,
 And strong and large and unimprov'd around,
 Its Owner's Temper, timorous and severe
 Unkind and griping caus'd a Desert there.
 As near the Miser's heavy Doors they drew
 Pierce rising Gusts with sudden Fury blew,
 The nimble Lightning mix'd with Showers began
 And o'er their Heads loud rolling Thunder ran.
 Here long they knock', but knock or call in vain,
 Driv'n by the Wind and batter'd by the Rain;
 At length some Pity warm'd the Master's Breast
 'Twas then his Threshold first receiv'd a Guest,
 Slow creaking turns the Door with jealous Care
 And half he welcomes in the thivering Pair;
 One frugal Faggot lights the naked Walls
 And Natur's Fervor thro' their Limbs recalls,
 Bread of the coarsest Sort with eager Wine
 Each hardly granted, serv'd them both to dine :
 And when the Tempest first appear'd to cease
 A ready Warning bid them part in Peace



With still Remark the pond'ring Hermit view'd,
 In one so rich, a Life so poor and rude,
 And why should such, within himself he cry'd,
 Lock the lost Wealth, a Thousand want beside.
 But what new Marks of Wonder soon took place
 In every settling Feature of his Face
 When from his Vest the young Companion bore
 That Cup the gen'rous Landlord own'd before,
 And paid profusely with the precious Bowl,
 The stinted Kindness of this churlish Soul.
 But now the Clouds in airy Tumult fly,
 The Sun emerging ope's an azure Sky,
 A fresher green the smelling Leaves display,
 And glitt'ring as they tremble cheer the Day,
 The Weather courts them from the Poor retreat,
 And the glad Master bolts the wary Gate,
 While hence they walk, the Pilgrim's Bosom wrought,
 With all the Travel of uncertain Thought,
 His Partner's Acts without their Cause appear,
 'Twas there a Vice, and seem'd a Madness here;
 Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes
 Lost and confounded with the various Shows,
 Now Night's dim Shades involve the azure Sky,
 Again they search and find a Lodging nigh.
 The Soil improv'd around the Mansion neat,
 And neither poorly low nor idly great,
 It seem'd to speak its Master's turn of Mind,
 Content, and not for Praise, but Virtue kind;
 Hither the Walkers turn with weary Feet,
 Then bless the Mansion and the Master greet,
 Their Greeting fair bestow'd with modest Guise,
 The courteous Master hears and thus replies;
 Without a vain, without a grudging Heart
 To him who gives us all, I yield a Part,
 From Him you come, for Him accept it here
 A frank and sober more than costly Cheer.
 He spoke, and bid the welcome Table spread,
 Then talk'd of Virtue till the Time of Bed;
 When the grave Household round his Hall repair,
 Warn'd by a Bell, and close the Hours with Prayer;
 At length the World renew'd by calm Repose,
 Was strong for Toil; the dappled Morn arose.
 Before the Pilgrims part, the Younger crept
 Near the clos'd Cradle, where an Infant slept,
 And writh'd his Neck, the Landlord's little Pride
 O strange Return! grew black and gasped, and dy'd.
 Horror of Horrors! What his only Son?
 How look'd our Hermit when the Fact was done!

Not Hell, tho' Hell's black Jaws in sunder Part,
 And breathe blue Fire, could more assault his Heart;
 Confus'd and struck with Silence at the Deed,
 He flies, but trembling fails to fly with speed;
 His Steps the Youth pursues, the Country lay
 Perplex'd with Roads, a Servant show'd the Way;
 A River cross'd the Path, the Passage o'er
 Was nice to find, the Servant trod before;
 Long Arms of Oaks an open Bridge supply'd,
 And deep the Waves beneath them bending Glide,
 The Youth who seem'd to watch a time to Sin,
 Approach'd the careless Guide and thrust him in;
 Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his Head,
 Then flashing turns and sinks among the Dead,
 Wild sparkling Rage inflames the Fathers Eyes
 He bursts the Bands of Fear and madly cries,
 Detested Wretch — But scarce his Speech began
 When the strange Partner seem'd no longer Man;
 His youthful Face grew more serenely sweet,
 His Robe turn'd white and flow'd upon his Feet
 Fair Rounds of radiant Points invest his Hair,
 Celestial Odours breath'd thro' purple Air;
 The Form Ethereal bursts upon his Sight
 And moves in all the Majesty of Light:
 Tho' loud at first the Pilgrim's Passion grew,
 Sudden he gaz'd and wist not what to do,
 Surprise in secret Chains his Words suspends
 And in a Calm his settling Temper ends,
 But Silence here the beauteous Angel broke
 The Voice of Musick ravish'd as he spoke,
 Thy Prayer, thy Praise, thy Life to Vice unknown
 In sweet Memorial rise before the Throne,
 These Charms Success in our bright Region find
 And force an Angel down to calm thy Mind;
 For this commission'd I forsook the Sky,
 Nay cease to kneel — Thy Fellow-Servant I;
 Then know the Truth of Government Divine,
 And let these Scruples be no longer thine;
 The Maker justly claims that World he made,
 In this the Right of Providence is laid;
 Its sacred Majesty thro' all depends
 On using second Means to Work his Ends,
 'Tis thus withdrawn in State from human Eye
 The Power exerts his Attributes on high;
 Your Actions uses, nor controuls your Will
 And bids the doubting Sons of Men be still:
 What strange Events can strike with more Surprise
 Than those which lately struck thy wandering Eyes?

Yet taught by these confess th' Almighty just
 And where thou can't unriddle, learn to trust,
 The great Vain Man who far'd on costly Food,
 Whose Life was too luxurious to be good,
 Who made his Ivory Stands with Goblets shine,
 And forc'd his Guests to morning Draughts of Wine,
 Has with the Cup, the graceless Custom lost,
 And still he welcomes, but with less of Cost.
 The mean suspicious Wretch whose bolted Door
 Ne'er mov'd in Duty to the wandering Poor,
 With him I left the Cup, to teach his Mind,
 That Heaven can blefs, if Mortals will be kind,
 Conscious of wanting worth he views the Bowl,
 And feels Compassion touch his grateful Soul;
 Thus Artists melt the sullen Oar of Lead,
 With heaping Coals of Fire upon its Head,
 In the kind Warmth the Metal learns to glow,
 And loose from Dross the Silver runs below.
 Long had our pious Friend in Virtue trod,
 But now this Child half wean'd his Heart from God,
 Child of his Age, for him he liv'd in Pain,
 And measur'd back his Steps to Earth again:
 To great Excesses had his Dotage run?
 But God to save the Father, took the Son,
 To all, but thee, in Fits he seem'd to go,
 And 'twas my Ministry to deal the Blow.
 The poor, fond Parent humbled in the Dust,
 Now owns, in Tears, the Punishment is just.
 But how had all his Fortune felt a Wreck
 Had that false Servant sped in Safety back?
 This Night his treasured Heaps he meant to steal,
 And what a Fund of Charity would fail?
 Thus Heaven instructs thy Mind; this Tryal o'er
 Depart in Peace, resign and sin no more.
 On sounding Pinions here the Youth withdrew,
 The Sage stood wond'ring as the Seraph flew;
 Thus look't *Elisha* when to mount on high
 His Master took the Chariot of the Sky,
 The fiery Pomp ascending left the View,
 The Prophet gaz'd and wish'd to follow too.
 The Hermit, bending, here a Prayer begun,
 "Lord as in Heaven on Earth thy Will be done
 Then gladly turning sought his ancient Place
 And pass'd a Life of Piety and Peace.

THE Inspiration of God, and the clear Information of the Holy Scriptures assures us, that God reserves his choicest Secrets for the purest Minds, and that its uncleanness of Spirit, not difference of Method in seeking after God, that separates us from him; true Holiness being the only safe Entrance into divine Knowledge. The Apostle Peter declares *Act. 10, 34, That he perceived of a Truth that God is no respecter of Persons: But in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness is accepted with him.* And the Apostle Paul also tells the *Galatians Chap. 6, 15, That in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision but a new Creature.* Notwithstanding the Clearness of these and many more such Doctrines contained in the Scriptures, Selfishness and Partiality, those inhuman and base Qualities have been suffered to prevail even amongst such, as are esteemed the most pious in the several Sects and Parties of the Christian Church: They have raised and still raise in every Communion, a selfish partial Orthodoxy, which consists in courageously defending all its Opinions and Practices, and condemning the Doctrines and Practices of others; and thus every one is train'd up in Defence of their own Church, their own Truth, their own Opinion; And he often is judged to have the most Merit, and the most Honour, who likes every Thing, and defends every Thing amongst themselves, and leaves nothing uncensured in those that are of a different Communion. Now how can Truth, Goodness and Religion be more struck at, than by such Defenders of it? If you ask why the great Bishop of *Meaux* wrote so many learned Books against all Parts of the Reformation, it is because he was born in *France*. Had he been born in *England*, had he been bred at *Oxford* or *Cambridge*, he might have rival'd our great Bishop *Stillingfleet*, and would have wrote as many learn'd Folio's against the Church of *Rome*, as he has done. And yet I will venture to say, that if each Church could produce but one Man a Piece, that had the Piety of an Apostle, and the impartial Love of the first Christians, they would not want half a Sheet of Paper to hold their Articles of Union, nor be half an Hour before they were of one Religion. If we loved Truth as such; if we sought it for its own sake; if we loved our neighbours as our selves; if we desir'd nothing by our Religion but to be acceptable to God; if we equally desir'd the Salvation of all Men; if we were afraid of Error only because of its hurtful Nature to us, and our Brethren of other Communions, then nothing of this Spirit could have any Place in us. *For God is Love, and they which dwell in God, they dwell in Love, 1 John 4, 16.* That universal Love which gives the whole Strength of the Heart to God, and which makes us love every Man as we love ourselves, is the noblest, the most divine, and God-like State of the Soul, and is the utmost Perfection to which the most perfect Religion can raise us, and no Religion does any Man any good, but so far, as it brings this perfect Love with it. Perfection can no where be found, but in a pure disinterested Love of God, and our Neighbour. Therefore

therefore a Communion of Saints in the Love of God, which no one can learn from that which is called Orthodoxy in the different Sects, but is only to be had by a total Dying to all worldly Views, by a pure Love of God, and by such an Unction from above, as delivers the Mind from all Selfishness, and makes it love Truth and Goodness with an Equality of Affection in every Man, let his Name and Profession to Religion be what it may. And by thus uniting in Heart and Spirit with all that is holy and good in all professions, we enter into the true Communion of Saints, and become real Members of the true universal Christian Church, tho' we are confin'd to the outward Worship of only one particular Part of it. It is thus, that the Angels, as ministring Spirits, assist, join, unite and co-operate with every Thing that is holy and good in every Division of Mankind. He that has been all his Life long used to look with great Slight upon those of other Professions, whom he has called *Superstitious Biggots, dreaming Visionaries, canting Enthusiasts &c.* must naturally expect they will be treated by God, as they have been by him; and if he had the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, such People would find it hard, to get a Place in it. But it stands greatly in Hand to get rid of this Temper before we dye; for if nothing but universal Love can enter into the Kingdom of God, what can be more necessary for us, than to be full of this Love before we dye?

We often hear of People of great Zeal and Orthodoxy, declaring on their Death-Beds their strict Attachment to the Church of England, and making solemn Protestations against all other Churches; but how much better would it be, if such a Person was to say, In this divided State of Christendom, I must conform to some outward divided Part of it, and therefore I have chosen to live, and dye in outward Communion with the church of England; fully believing, that if I worship God in Spirit and in Truth, in this divided Part of the Church, I shall be as acceptable to him, as if I had been a faithful Member of the one whole Church before it was broken into separate Parts. But as I am now going out of this disordered Division, into a more universal State of Things, as I am going to the God of all Churches, to a Kingdom of universal Love, which must have its Inhabitants from all People, Nations, and Languages of the Earth; so in this Spirit of universal Love, I desire to perform my last Act of Communion in this divided Church, uniting and joining in Heart and Spirit with all that is Christian, Holy, Good and acceptable to God in all other Churches; praying, from the Bottom of my Soul, that every Church may have its Saints; that God's Kingdom may come, his Will be done in every Division of Christians and Men, and that every Thing that hath Breath may praise the Lord?

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THE Humble, Meek, Merciful, Just, Pious and Devout Souls are every where of one Religion; and when Death has taken off the Mask, they will know one another, tho' the divers Liveries they wear here makes them Strangers. Let us chuse to commune where there is the warmest Sense of Religion; where Devotion exceeds Formality, and Practice most corresponds with Profession; and where there is at least as much Charity as Zeal. For where this Society is to be found there shall we find the Church of God.

Willam Penn's Refl. & Max.

AN Eminent Servant of God who had known deliverance from the dark Powers and experimentally felt the Powers of the World to come a few Hours before his Death, expressed himself in the following Words. 'There is a Spirit which I feel, that delights to do no Evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all Things, in Hopes to enjoy its own in the End; Its Hope is, to outlive all Wrath and Contention, and to weary out all Exaltation and Cruelty, or whatsoever is of a Nature contrary to itself; it sees to the End of all Temptations; as it bears no Evil in it self, so it conceives none in Thought to any other; for its Ground and Spring is the Mercies and Forgiveness of God; its Crown is Meekness; its Life is everlasting Love unfeigned, and takes its Kingdom with Intreaty, and not with Contention, and keeps it by lowliness of Mind; in God alone it can rejoice, tho' none else regard it, or can own its Life; 'tis conceived in Sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it, nor doth it murmur at Grief and Oppression; it never rejoiceth but thro' Sufferings, for with the World's Joy it is murdered. I found it alone being forsaken: I have Fellowship therein with them that lived in Dens and desolate Places of the Earth, who through Death obtained Resurrection and eternal holy Life.

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